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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : "Improving the Image of CIA"
Views of Chiefs of Station Seminar Students

1. This memorandum is for your information only.
2. The student views often repetitive and sometimes contradictory are summarized below:

a. The Status of the Agency's Image

"It is being hurt." We "must grin and bear it."
"To the public there is an aura of glamour around CIA."
It is not as shabby as publicity might indicate. I'm "amused at the degree of concern over the 'damage'." It is not really hurt until agent recruitment is affected. The area "where we must be very concerned about CIA's image" is the college campus.

b. The Origin of the Problem

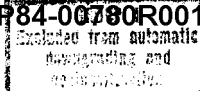
Agency activities will be found out by the information media. We must not hand the publicists the tools (handouts, leaks) to attack us. It is from the State Department that "the greatest resentment and back-biting seems to come," but "we appear to have contributed to this." "A press policy confined to reacting as opposed to one which actively seeks to present CIA in a favorable light."

c. The Threat Posed by the Trend

An unchecked erosion of confidence will result in trouble for us even in East Podunk. Will lead to "trouble in the White House, Department of State, Bureau of the Budget, etc."

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"When we can no longer get the real good young men, we're in trouble." Let the flurry of publicity die, "if the newspapers get no rise from the Agency, they will soon lose interest."

d. How to Defend the Agency Image

In the long run only the quality of our operations will appease Congress, the White House, State, the press, etc., and quality of operations is simply another way of saying quality of personnel. No gimmicks will do it. We must "enlist its (the information media) friendship and support," for "they will practice self-restraint if they are convinced of the need to protect certain information. Let us "leak" success stories. "I do not argue for opening a broadside of self-generated favorable publicity as the FBI. . . ." We must develop "better personal relations as opposed to official relationships" with the TV, radio and press. Contact with all media should be centrally located and tightly controlled. Handouts should be honest and reflect support of U.S. policy and defense of U.S. institutions while exposing and frustrating Communist aims and subversion.

"We must be more thick-skinned". We need to "indoctrinate our own officers in handling State in a sensible and mutually respectful fashion." We have a public law assigning us a mission to perform and we "should never be defensive about our reason for being. . . ." Take away some mystery surrounding our environment. Other agencies have secrets but through a well-managed public relations program maintain a position of responsibility.

We need a program to debate with educators; to seek out opinion makers and through them put the Agency before the people in its proper perspective; to invite exchanges with Congress; to go to court and discredit slanderers; to release information to Congressmen and educators which is impossible to keep secret; to organize a publication bureau through which useful unclassified material can be made available to educators and the public.

R. L. Bannerman

Deputy Director
for Support

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THE AGENCY'S IMAGE

Origin of the Problem

- a. Inherent part of our culture - 2
- b. Leaks to media - 1
- c. Not enough leaks on success - 1
- d. Lack of understanding by media of damage by exposure - 1
- e. Misinformation on Agency and its operations - 3
- f. Negative press policy - 1
- g. Lack of well-managed public relations program - 1
- h. No comment - 3

Present Status of Image

- a. Being hurt - 3
- b. No real damage yet - 2
- c. Could be improved - 8

COS Recommendations to Improve Image

- a. A positive public relations program, including improved media relations, use of experts and a special Agency group concerned with image, contacts with students and educators, furnishing sanitized success stories for the press and TV, explaining the role of espionage in preserving democratic principles, etc. - 8
- b. Improve quality of personnel, security, cover, and performance. - 4
- c. Improve relations with Congress, other agencies and allies. - 4
- d. "Grin and bear it" except for answering gravest charges. - 3
- e. More rigid control of media contacts. - 1
- f. Stop revealing operations to media. - 1

NOTE: Some COS made recommendations falling into two or more categories.

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